

From: George Williams <georgepwilliams069@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 09, 2016 3:04 PM
To: Board of Supervisors; County of SLO Planning Dept.
Subject: Phillips Rail Proposal

To: Honorable Members of the San Luis Obispo

Board of Supervisors
Commissioners and Members of the San Luis Obispo Department of Building and Planning

I am a recent transplant to San Luis Obispo County, having moved here from Washington DC where I spent the last 15 years as the federal government affairs executive of a Fortune 300 international energy corporation. As a result of that job I fully understand the difficulties in siting facilities in this state, especially linear ones. But I am nonetheless shocked to hear of your consideration of plans that would put at risk close to 100,000 of the residents of the county, in the interest of supporting an individual corporation's business plan.

The most immediate concern, of course, is of a catastrophic accident and its consequences to people and property. I am particularly concerned that my house is in the area of Atascadero known as "the Lakes" – which has the rail line running along its entire length, and where most if not all of the houses would be within the blast zone. The entire community is gated and has one evacuation exit, a metal automated gate, which is directly adjacent to the rail crossing. In the event of a derailment and fire, I am concerned that my neighbors and I would not have an evacuation option.

As a new home purchaser I am also troubled by the threat to our property values -- in effect a taking of value from your citizens. Such a value-depressing impact is likely from just the disclosure of the risk, let alone the impact of an accident. And in the event of an actual accident even the impact of lesser damages than a catastrophic fire, such as the damage from oil spills to our two lakes and to the nearby river, would have a permanent impact on our properties.

In my recent job I directed my corporation's dealings with Congress, the White House and all federal agencies, including US DOT, and as a result while I did not work on any of the controversial proposals for oil trains around the country, I became somewhat aware of the troubling record nationwide of what are often labeled by opponents in Washington as "bomb trains." Ironically, even as I write this, to the north the news is of last week's Union Pacific oil train derailment and fire in the Columbia River Gorge.

Moving forward with a plan that adds this level of physical risk to our community without first at a minimum adequately addressing such profound issues as our emergency evacuation options would be negligent. The plan itself would ensure the unavoidable financial risk to property owners along the rail lines involved. Our community is counting on you to do the right thing and protect our economic and physical well-being from this threat, which is driven by the interests of one profit center of one company.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

George Williams

Atascadero

Email: Georgepwilliams069@gmail.com